



## CONNECTICUT

**TESTIMONY OF  
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS (NFIB)  
ANDY MARKOWSKI, CONNECTICUT STATE DIRECTOR  
OPPOSING  
HB-5283, AAC EXPANSION OF FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE  
BEFORE THE  
LABOR & PUBLIC EMPLOYEES COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 27, 2014**

*A non-profit, non-partisan organization founded in 1943, NFIB is Connecticut's and the nation's leading small-business association. In Connecticut, NFIB represents thousands of members and their employees. NFIB membership is scattered across the state and ranges from sophisticated high technology enterprises to "Main Street" small businesses to single-person "Mom & Pop" shops that operate in traditional ways. NFIB's mission is "To promote and protect the right of its members to own, operate, and grow their businesses." On behalf of those small- and independent- job-providers in Connecticut, I offer the following comments:*

NFIB/Connecticut has concerns with HB-5283, and suggests rejection. While no doubt well-intentioned, expanding eligibility for Connecticut's existing Family and Medical Leave provisions, which are already more generous than that of federal or other states' laws, is unnecessary, could lead to a "slippery-slope" effect on the law, and could have unintended consequences and costs for employers, both in terms of staffing and productivity, among other issues. Expansion of the FMLA could create considerable burdens on impacted small businesses. Most small-business owners already provide a great amount of flexibility and generosity in allowing their employees to take time off for family or medical purposes. NFIB surveys have indicated that 96 percent of small-business owners provide flexible hours when personal situations arise, regardless of the firm's size. Government mandates take away small employers' and employees' freedom to negotiate the benefits package that best meets their mutual needs. Expanding FMLA coverage provisions could drastically increase the amount of paperwork and money spent complying as well. Increasing the number of those circumstances covered by FMLA imposes a significant new mandate on small business, and also ignores the question of whether or not a small employer can actually afford to keep a position open until an employee returns from leave. It's a burden for most small-business owners to keep a job open for even the most valued employee, and larger businesses are better able to absorb the costs forced on a business by government mandates. Small businesses know what to expect and how to comply with Connecticut's existing FMLA law, and discourages changes that would expand the law as well as make Connecticut appear even more uncompetitive with other states.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and NFIB urges lawmakers to take no action on HB-5283.